

NLT 7A.60

ER 1-2053

CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY
WASHINGTON 25, D. C.

(43)

17 August 1950

MEMORANDUM

SUBJECT: The Korean Situation

I. Military Situation

Summary

Although no significant changes have occurred along the front lines, heavy fighting continues. In the Chinju area, the enemy, following a planned withdrawal and consolidation of UN forces, is probing cautiously along the new line. The reinforced bridgehead above the junction of the Nam and Nakdong Rivers is under attack by the US 24th Division, now reinforced by the 1st Provisional Marine Brigade; the enemy will probably attempt a break-through with the probable objective of cutting the main railroad line to Pusan in the Yongsan-Hiryang area. The enemy bridgehead farther to the north, six miles south of Taksong, is also under attack, but unconfirmed reports credit the enemy with 10-20,000 replacements behind the lines in this area. East of Waegwan, the North Korean forces have been driven back by the US 1st Cavalry Division and the ROK 1st Division. The north sector has remained stable. Below Yongdok, the ROK 3rd Division is being evacuated by water, and no enemy action has developed to hamper the withdrawal.

Sector Reports

Following the withdrawal and consolidation by the US forces in the Chinju area, the North Korean 6th Division is probing cautiously along the new line. Because of recent losses suffered by this enemy division, it is not considered capable of becoming a serious major threat to Masan in the near future. Task Force Kean, which conducted the offensive in this area last week, has been dissolved, and the area is now the zone of responsibility of the US 25th Division, reinforced above its three regiments by the attachment of the 5th RCT.

In the Yongsan area, where the enemy's strongest bridgehead is located, the 1st Provisional Marine Brigade has joined Task Force Hill

Declassified by 033769
date 26 SEP 1979

in the US 24th Division zone, and heavy fighting continues. The North Korean 4th Division is expected to attempt a break-out from the bridgehead, with the probable objective of severing the railroad lines to Pusan in the Yongsan-Kiryang area. Latest reports, however, state that the UN attack against the bridgehead is progressing satisfactorily.

Six miles south of Taksong, the enemy has crossed the river and established a bridgehead in the 1st Cavalry Division zone. Unconfirmed reports indicate that the 10th North Korean Division is in this area, and that between 10,000 and 20,000 replacements have arrived in the vicinity of Hyopchon to the southwest. The movement of the enemy in this area is considered to be directed at the US 24th Division zone to the south, and not toward Taegu.

East of Waegwan, both the US 1st Cavalry Division and the ROK 1st Division have made gains against the enemy. With the over-extended US 1st Cavalry Division facing the North Korean 3rd, 13th and 15th Divisions across the river, continued heavy fighting is expected, extending northward into the ROK 1st Division zone.

Along the north sector the situation has remained stable, following the planned withdrawals of the ROK 6th and 8th Divisions. An enemy attack along the front has been contained, but North Korean forces are reported moving south from Kumwi. The recently reported easing of enemy pressure against the ROK 8th Division continues, and may indicate that the North Korean 7th Division is moving eastward, possibly to join the 5th Division in a concerted thrust against the UN forces near Pohang.

On the east coast, below Yongdok, the amphibious withdrawal of the ROK 3rd Division is proceeding unharpered by enemy action. The situation remains stable in the east coast area.

Another important railroad junction, however, is at Kyong-Ju, twenty miles from Pohang, and if the 7th and 5th Divisions join the North Korean 12th Division in the area, an attempt will probably be made to cut the rail line. This operation, combined with a severing of the line in the Miryang area, would throttle UN communications.

Reports from the B-29 mass operations yesterday state that the mission was technically a very successful bomb drop.

UN air forces continued close support missions, and conducted bombing attacks against military targets in 15 towns, including Yongdok,

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Inchon, and Seoul. Air units of the US 7th Fleet conducted heavily destructive missions against troops and equipment behind the enemy lines in the north sector.

II. Other Developments

Despite the North Korean threat to Taegu, the South Korean National Assembly reconvened there on 15 August after a thirteen day recess. One hundred and twenty of the one hundred and thirty-nine members registered as of 1 August were present for the session which was devoted to presentation of routine reports.

R. H. HILLENKOTTER
Rear Admiral, USN
Director of Central
Intelligence

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